1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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taken to the *pret' savanne* to be blessed with holy water; in the town the Catholic priest is said to do this. In full mourning, black is worn on Sundays, Mondays, and Fridays, the days sacred to the dead, but since full mourning means that one must be dressed in one's best and it is impossible to wear these clothes all day long even in the first weeks after death, the rule is to remain at home, fully dressed, on Sundays, Mondays, and Fridays, wearing the full mourning outside the house only to Sunday mass.

When full mourning for a parent cannot be worn immediately following death, the fulfillment of the obligation is postponed. If this duty is not ultimately met, however, the dead take vengeance, so that a child of the one who was remiss perhaps falls ill, or some other misfortune comes to him. If the negligent one is no longer living, then the penalty for his neglect will be assessed on his children, who, on consulting a diviner, will be told that they must wear mourning not only for their own parents, but for their grandparents as well. Such is the case of a dying woman whose story is recounted, for a diviner ascertained that though she had worn mourning for her own father, he had not worn it for his parent; as soon as she put on full mourning for her grandfather, she is said to have immediately recovered.

A widower wears mourning for a legally married wife for a year, and a widow for her husband during a similar period, and it is believed that if a man were to remarry before the year has elapsed, his second wife would die, so that a woman will not go sooner to a widower, while it is equally dangerous for a widow to take a husband before the first anniversary of the death of her spouse. Should a *placée* wife die, however, another may be taken in her stead before the year has passed, for it is only in matters where the Church is concerned that the dead take vengeance. Furthermore, a man who has more than one mate may go to his other wives at any time after the death of a spouse, and though he would, of course, not go to them

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558 given him by a third party for whom he had done what was
793 euphemistically called "a piece of work." The evidence
685 clearly showed that the animal, which he had killed to feed a *combite*, had been stolen, and since this *gangan* could not establish his defense that he was an innocent receiver of stolen goods, he was convicted and sentenced to three months in prison, and to pay the owner of the pig the exorbitant sum — sixty-five gourdes — asked as damages. Sympathy was very generally with the *gangan*, but the opinion most often heard expressed was that his power had obviously been lessened by his misuse of the *connaissance* the gods had given him, or they would not have permitted even his arrest, much less his conviction. To reinforce the point, specific reference was repeatedly made to the *hungan* most popular in the valley at the time, about whom it was said that, for example, were he accused before a court, the officers might even enter his house in search of him while he was present, but they would still be unable to see that he was before them.

793 Other attitudes held toward workers of magic developed in
435 connection with this case. The popular *hungan* was often
559 called on, it was said, because his work was well done and his fees were not too high; it was pointed out that there were renowned *vodun* priests who charged five hundred gourdes for a *service* which this man directed effectively for but little over one hundred; moreover, such men often failed to remove the evil deities which were troubling the family that employed them, but would instead add more, so that their clients would
793 soon have need of them again. Practices such as these, espe-
435 cially that of overcharging, are frowned upon by the *loa*, and
559 if persisted in they "spoil" the power of the priest. This was
● 784 one of the reasons why, in the opinion of many individuals, the *gangan* in question had been convicted. "He was once a remarkable *gangan*, but he has spoiled his *loa* by using them for evil, and by asking too much money for what he was employed

1; Herskovits E-4, 8 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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to do. The *loa* would come, but they wouldn't give him the same *connaissance*."

One of the most important of the forces behind all magic is the *Malt' Carrefour*, the Master of the Crossroads. The possible identity of this *loa* with Legba, who guards the entrance to houses and is also thought of as a guardian of the highways, was a question that could not be satisfactorily resolved, though it seems most likely that the two are quite distinct, since Legba is but rarely called upon when magic is being performed. One Haitian versed in magic stated:

> "The *Malt' Carrefour* is like the president. Legba is like a minister. God sent the *Malt' Carrefour*. He commands Baron Samedi. Before going to the cemetery to perform [black] magic you must pass the crossroads, and therefore he is able to restrain you if he is not properly worshipped. He commands Damballa. He commands the Rada and Pétro gods. He commands all the saints because all of these must pass the crossroads. Therefore when one has a *garde carrefour*, a person will die a death sent by God [that is, a natural death] and not one caused by *magie* or the *mystères*."

The *Malt' Carrefour* must be "paid" each year on All Saints' Day, when seven cents in copper coins are given and a white chicken is killed, cooked, and placed in a wooden container with rice, biscuits, cassava, potatoes, bananas, and other kinds of food, both cooked and uncooked, to be deposited at a crossroad with the statement: "Here is food; thank you for having cared for me. If evil *loa* wish to harm me, *Malt' Carrefour*, restrain them." As this is said, a candle is lighted and an invocation pronounced:

> *"Au nom de Malt' Carrefou'; au nom de Malt' Grand Bois; au nom de Baron Cimitière! Jodia, premier la*

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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Toussaint, voici un couvert moin porté ba ou. Ou gardé vot' enfant, comme vot' père et vot' mère dans la maison. — In the name of the Master of the Crossroads; in the name of the Master of the Great Forest; in the name of Baron Cemetery! Today, the first of All Saints' Day, here are offerings I bring you. Guard your child as your father and your mother in the house."

[788] *Clairin* is thrown three times at each fork of the crossroads, and some is also sprinkled in the center and at each corner of the container of food. Three bits of earth are finally lifted from the corners of the crossroads and taken to the home of the worshipper. Here they are put in a plate with *clairin*, which is first lighted and then extinguished, so that the members of the family can anoint themselves with it and receive strength with which to face the new year.

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Good magic has many expressions. Thus there is said to be secret knowledge, transmitted in certain families from generation to generation, of how to control the rains. Those who have control of magic of this sort are to be recognized when they are seen to be completely dry while walking in a downpour. Generally such powers are used to insure a rainless day for a *combite* or *service*, or to cause rain to fall the day after a *combite* has made the field ready for hoeing, or when the proper time for planting is at hand. Eventually, it is said, in response to a temptation too great to be resisted, the possessor of such magic will put it to other, evil ends. Then sooner or later the punishment for this abuse of his knowledge is visited upon him, so that in the end he meets his death by being struck by the avenging lightning.

[784]

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The most powerful type of protective magic is known as a *drogue*. One of the most potent of these — of the type referred to by Léger in commenting on the ox-tail carried by Hyacinthe, or such a one as tradition holds Christophe possessed, which gave him immunity from all but silver bullets — makes

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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it possible for the owner to go to war without being harmed. Even were the possessor of such a *drogue* to be struck by a bullet, the wound would be a minor one; while the thrust of a machete or saber would leave him unscathed, poison placed in drink or food would be impotent, and a trap set against the warrior would be ineffective. Some *drogues*, it is held, allow the owner to disappear when trapped by enemies. For such an important *drogue* a special day, designated by its maker, is set aside for the observance of certain taboos, the most important being the requirement of sexual abstinence on that day.[6] Some men possess as many as seven of these *drogues*, in which case one day every seventh week is reserved for each. Said a man who had taken part in the rebellion of 1918–20 against the Marine occupation: "I have a small, small *drogue*. I had it in the Caco fighting. I have need of a big one." When it was observed that there is no more fighting in Haiti, the reply came promptly: "A man must be prepared. Nobody knows what will come."

The grandfather of this man was said by him to have owned a *drogue* which came from Guinée. He knew how to resuscitate those who had met their death from unnatural — magical — causes; he had only to come to the *barrière* before the house where the body lay, call the name of the victim, and the dead would arise. He was once attacked when he was returning home with a purse filled with money he had won at cards, and his assailants beat him to death and threw him into a well. The next morning, when he was found, he revived in a few moments and asked to be buried beside the well. The following day one of the men who had assaulted him died; the next day another died, and so for five days, until all of them were dead.

Love-charms form an important category of good magic, as also charms to aid in selling in the markets or in keeping a job or to hold the affection of a spouse. Old men are believed to have important magical powers for good, and one such

2: Courlander 8-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

764 invoked the loa, the pallbearers brought the body forward as though to go straight ahead, but then they began to lurch and sway as though an invisible force were pushing them around. They veered as though to take the right turn, and again they lurched and staggered. At last they turned toward the left, and in this direction they found the road clear. The houngan thanked the Master of the Crossroads, the widow took her place at the head of the procession, and it proceeded on its way to the cemetery.

793 In the services for a dead houngan described by Simpson, the body is 764 placed in a coffin, which is carried to all the places sacred to the loa of the 762 hounfor before being taken to the cemetery. First it is taken to the sacred trees where the loa reside, then to the sacred spring "whose waters have cured many sicknesses which physicians had pronounced incurable . . . (823) The bearers of the coffin circle the spring several times. The coffin is swung [toward] each of the four cardinal points." Afterward the procession continues its way to the burial ground.[1]A

766 But the treatment given to the dead may vary according to the manner 774 in which they died. Leyburn notes, for example, that "a person struck by 761 lightning . . . would have no ceremonies at all, for lightning is an act of God."[2]A It may well be that the Haitian rationale for not holding ceremonies for an individual killed by lightning is that God has already held the final ceremony. But in the Haitian mind all deaths are, in the last analysis, acts of God, even though magic, poison, or accident may have played an immediate part. Why, then, should the corpse struck by lightning be treated so differently? The answer would appear to lie in a custom 771 of the Yoruba of dispensing with all burial rites for persons killed by 766 lightning, such persons being considered enemies of the lightning deity 761 Chango. In Dahomey, Herskovits reports, the same attitude prevails in (774) regard to persons killed by lightning:

> If a person is killed by lightning he . . . stands convicted by this fact of some grave crime which has incurred the displeasure of the god of the Thunder Pantheon (Xevioso). A person so killed is never buried by his family, but the body is turned over to the chief priest and sub-members of these deities. It is believed that a man killed in this fashion remains upright until the chief priest questions him and forces him to confess the crimes he had committed to be so punished. No one touches any of the belongings of such a man, not even his money. The house in which he lived is allowed to go to ruin, an ounce of palm fronds being placed around it to guard (808) against anyone entering it. The moveable property of such a man, his clothes, his (784) stools, and his dishes, are thrown away at the crossroads . . .[3]A (824)

766 The burial of a Haitian who dies of smallpox likewise differs from that of one who dies a "normal" death. The victim of smallpox is buried without a coffin in a segregated part of the cemetery. The reason for this lies

1 [Simpson, Op. Cit., p. 161. Cf. P 350 Category 116 -- Analyst]
2 [Leyburn, The Haitian People, p. 156. Cf. P 350, Category 116 -- Analyst]
3 [Herskovits, Dahomey, I, 398. Cf P 350, Category 116 - Analyst]

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1965) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

763 764 special funds to defray expenses, or even set a day for the "last prayers"; and it is said that misfortune is likely to overtake his family if his wishes are not carried out. Métraux cites a story of a man who had told his wife that if he should happen to die on a Sunday she should hold "last prayers" for him on a Tuesday. It happened to be a Tuesday when the man died.

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They held the burial in the afternoon. As they began the prayers on Wednesday, the last prayer finished on Wednesday week. But as Brother Lédan had always said they should hold his last prayer on a Tuesday, his wife was quite willing to hold it Tuesday. One Tuesday when everyone knew that the last prayer was being held, his wife heard her brother-in-law who told her that wasn't customarily done [that is, shortening the period of prayers]. Then she put off the last prayer.

Thereupon, according to the story, two strangers appeared in the house. They were offered chairs and they sat down. Suddenly, one of the men arose and said that the woman had announced that a last prayer was to be said that day. She said she had put it off. Then the other man got up and said: "Wasn't it today I ordered you to hold the last prayer?" The woman asked, "Who are you?" But both men disappeared. The woman fell unconscious, and died three days later.

769 The cycle of honoring, encouraging, and placating the spirits of the dead moves continuously. There is no beginning and no end. Although those who have died are no longer seen, they are part of the great community which encompasses those whose names are remembered and those who are forgotten, including ancestors who never left the shores of Africa. Death is merely another aspect of life, and its forces are ever present.

[761]

Cf. A [Hall and others, op. cit., p. 193. Cf. p. 350, Category 116. -- Analyst]